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Living in the Past: Examining Attitudes of Race and Sex on a Southern University Campus

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One of the intended effects of the Brown decisions was not only to dismantle Jim Crow, but to establish a generational movement against uniform separation of the races and especially in the South. Nearly five decades later, America still remains in the grip of various forms of segregation. In the post-Civil Rights Era, college campuses of all sizes generally reflect separation in classes, social activities, and housing patterns.

This research tests whether this picture is accurate at a small public university in the Deep South with a significant plurality of minority students. Two years of survey research at this institution reveals ostensibly different patterns of behavior and evaluation in the majority and minority populations suggesting that each views its role as essentially the same but from different perspectives.

We suggest that the data will eventually show that patterns of interaction between these two groups result from lessons learned from the surrounding community and that minority students adopt a coping mechanism in order to deal with a dominant culture which minority students perceive as insensitive to their view of the world.

Presenters

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